FWS Program Changes:  
What’s New for 2020-2021

This year there are a number of changes to the Federal Work Study program. Some would occur in any year; some are specific to this year, due to COVID-related accommodations; and others are long-desired process improvements, designed to streamline and simplify the work study process overall. Any departmental questions about what’s below or in the FWS Employer Handbook should be addressed to uvaworkstudy@virginia.edu.

Annual Changes/Updates

New FWS Award: **SR00269** (using the old award will cause payments to fail and your department to be charged 100%)

New University Wage Authorization: [https://provost.virginia.edu/wage-authorization-academic-areas.](https://provost.virginia.edu/wage-authorization-academic-areas) Please note that in most cases students’ wage rates will increase from last year. See below for the information that was carefully considered as we created the new wage bands found in Appendix A of the FWS Employer Handbook:

- Departments have been asked to moderate their spending during this extraordinary year.
- The overall university wage authorization for 2020-2021 was approved as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Profile</th>
<th>Hourly Rate</th>
<th>Maximum Hours per Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum*</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>$8.25</td>
<td>$18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Wage</td>
<td>$8.25</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- *The VA state minimum wage is increasing to **$9.50** as of May 1, 2021.
- HR will automatically increase to the minimum wage any employee who is being paid below the minimum as of the effective date; and the wage bands have been structured to take this eventual adjustment into account.
- This year we will use **overlapping** wage bands (rather than the **mutually exclusive** bands used in the past) to allow supervisors some additional flexibility, with the aim of reducing the need for wage exceptions. SFS, HR, and the Provost’s Office jointly agreed on this approach for several reasons:
  - Although departments have no control over the increase to the wage authorization overall, we wish to allow departments some amount of control over the impact that increase will have on individual budgets, while still encouraging equitable payment for work performed.
The new wage bands are designed to reflect the full wage spread found within the undergraduate and graduate authorizations, while also moderating somewhat any potential year-over-year increase in spending for the FWS program as a whole.

We wish to reduce the instance of departments having to choose between a) selecting an inappropriate Job Category in order to offer a particular wage or b) reneging on a promise to a student – for example, to pay an FWS recipient what s/he was being paid for the same work performed within a summer position if s/he subsequently moved in the fall to an FWS position, with its traditionally more defined wage parameters.

COVID-related Changes

Remote work is allowed: Not all jobs can be performed remotely. But where remote work is feasible (even if not necessarily required), we ask that departments please add the word “Remote” to the job title entered in the Workday posting, so FWS students engaged in distance learning will know they may apply. Naturally, it is still essential that supervisors be able to confirm in some manner that work is being performed as reflected in Workday time entries.

Process Improvements

New FWS voucher/job description process: Going forward, for the following Workday processes, a combined FWS voucher/job description will now be created as an integral step in the FWS position setup process within Workday:

- new hire,
- change job, and
- additional job

For the above processes only, it is no longer necessary to send a copy of the voucher/job description to Student Financial Services via e-mail.

However, if you are simply changing the student’s compensation, at present it will still be necessary to create and submit a PDF of the FWS voucher, and to send both that and a copy of the job description to uvaworkstudy@virginia.edu. (The voucher form can be found in Appendix D of the Employer Handbook and also on our website: https://sfs.virginia.edu/federal-work-study-administrators.) If we find we are able to automate the process for compensation changes, as well, we will do so at a later date and notify all departments.

Workstudy coordinators’ listserv: To ensure timely communication when needed, we are updating membership for the work study coordinators’ listserv. If you did not receive a message from Student Financial Services in mid-August but are involved with the work study program and wish to be included in the listserv, please contact us at uvaworkstudy@virginia.edu.